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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/777,019	02/11/2004	Tushar Patel	101896-234 (DEP5100CIP)	2233
21125	7590	08/11/2008	EXAMINER	
NUTTER MCCLENNEN & FISH LLP WORLD TRADE CENTER WEST 155 SEAPORT BOULEVARD BOSTON, MA 02210-2604			COMSTOCK, DAVID C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3733	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			08/11/2008	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

docket@nutter.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/777,019	PATEL ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	DAVID COMSTOCK	3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 April 2008.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-6,8,10-18 and 27-55 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-6,8,10-18 and 27-55 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 11 February 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

In view of the arguments filed 18 April 2008, the previous grounds of rejection have been withdrawn. However, new grounds of rejection have been discovered and are set forth below. Accordingly, prosecution is reopened and this action is made non-final.

Drawings

New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because while the drawings appear to be technically accurate, several of the handwritten reference numerals are illegible and the line quality of the figures is not consistently dark and of high contrast relative to the paper, thereby making it difficult to discern the details of the invention. Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsperson outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-6, 8, 10-18, 27, 28 and 40-54 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Greenberg (5,558,622; of record).

Greenberg discloses the claimed invention including elongate members, e.g. 54' and guides comprising first and second pathways (see openings in element 120''). See Fig. 27B. A cut-out portion extends between the two openings (id.). The guide has a width that is less than a distal portion of the elongate member. A distal portion of the elongate member is planar and positioned at an angle with respect to a back sidewall of the guide member. A plate is shown (see, e.g., Figs. 16 and 17). The device can comprise a single retractor or be coupled with a second retractor (see, e.g., Fig. 20). The device is capable of being used in the claimed manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 29, 30 and 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Greenberg (5,558,622; of record).

Greenberg discloses the claimed invention except for explicitly reciting the clamp and post. However, as already memorialized in the Office action, mailed 08 February 2008, Applicant has admitted that clamp members and posts are well known in the art. In accordance with this, it would have been obvious to have provided the device of

Greenberg with a clamp member(s) and a post(s), for example, to facilitate positioning of the device and/or retraction of the patient, since adding clamp members and posts to retraction devices is old and well-known in the art. It also would have been obvious to have made the connector removable, for example to facilitate cleaning or storage, since it has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179. Moreover, determining an appropriate configuration, e.g., rectangular, elongated rod, etc., would have merely amounted to an obvious design choice, as there is no apparent, particular benefit to such designs and it appears that a connector would perform equally well without such a design.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 18 April 2008 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-4710 (a detailed message should be left if Examiner is unavailable). If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone or voicemail are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert, can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/David Comstock/
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733